

HON. THE CHIEF SECRETARY.

Wheat for Grain Areas 1915-16 to 1922-3. States of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Commonwealth.--

The Seasons 1915-16 and 1916-17 being the maximum wheat years for the above States and the Commonwealth a comparison has been made of the relative decreases from 1915-16 to 1922-23. The position is set forth clearly by taking the year 1915-16 as base and showing the % decreases for each year since, which position is readily observed by following the respective curves for the period.

On the area under wheat for grain in 1915-16 the % decreases in 1922-23 were Commonwealth 21.66%, New South Wales 29.25%, Victoria 28.14% and South Australia only 18.45%.

Comparing the season of greatest decrease 1919-20 the percentages were Commonwealth 48.58%, New South Wales 64.79%, Victoria 47.87% and South Australia only 29.65%.

Decreased wheat areas since 1915-16 are common to all these States at least of all by a considerable % margin in South Australia, hence it is clear that the factors contributing to such decreases are not local to any one State but evidently general.

23.1.24